

Message Text

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SUBJECT: U.S.-IRAQI RELATIONS

REF: BAGHDAD 991

1. BASIC GUIDANCE FOR DISCUSSING IMPROVEMENT OF U.S.-IRAQI RELATIONS IS IN RECORD OF HABIB'S TALKS WITH HAMMADI IN BAGHDAD, SUPPLEMENTED BY THE CHECKLIST FOR THIS VISIT (STATE 109435 TOSEC 040280) POUCHED FOR YOUR INFORMATION PREVIOUSLY. IN SHORT, THE U.S. IS PREPARED TO RE-ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, AND WITHOUT CONDITIONS. IF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS ARE RESUMED, WE REMAIN OPEN-MINDED AS REGARDS ASSIGNING AN AMBASSADOR INSTEAD OF A CHARGE TO BAGHDAD AND BELIEVE IT SHOULD BE NO MAJOR PROBLEM IN COMING TO A SATISFACTORY UNDERSTANDING WITH THE IRAQIS ON THAT POINT.

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2. WHILE IRAQI SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AND FOR THE REJECTIONIST POSITION IN THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT IS TROUBLESOME, OUR APPROACH TO AN IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS WITH IRAQ IS NOT IDENTICAL TO THAT BEING FOLLOWED WITH REGARD TO LIBYA. YOU CAN TAKE THE LINE--IF ASKED BY THE IRAQIS--THAT WE HOPE TO BRING ABOUT

A MORE OPEN AND SYSTEMATIC EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON MATTERS OF

MUTUAL INTEREST, PREFERABLY AT A SENIOR LEVEL. OUR VIEW IS THAT A MORE OPEN RELATIONSHIP OF THIS KIND WOULD ALLOW EACH GOVERNMENT TO HEAR IN A MORE AUTHORITATIVE WAY THE VIEWS OF THE OTHER, INCLUDING ISSUES ON WHICH THERE HAS BEEN AND MAY REMAIN DISAGREEMENT. AS HABIB SAID TO HAMMADI, WE ARE READY TO LISTEN TO THE IRAQIS AS WELL AS TO EXPLAIN OUR OWN POSITION. CHRISTOPHER

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